United Nations E/ICEF/2014/10

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
4 April 2014

Original: English

For discussion

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Annual session 2014
3-6 June 2014
Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Report on progress of work in gender equality and empowerment of women in UNICEF

Summary

This report is submitted pursuant to Executive Board decision 2013/9, which requested that UNICEF report during the 2014 annual session of the Executive Board on progress on gender equality and empowerment of women and on implementation of the new Gender Action Plan for 2014-2017.

* E/ICEF/2014/5.

14-29160 (E) 150414

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I. Introduction

1. UNICEF is at an important turning point, as the Millennium Development Goals agenda heads towards a conclusion, a new post-2015 framework is under construction and a new Strategic Plan has been adopted to shape the organization's direction for 2014-2017. Within this context, the development of a new Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2014-2017 in alignment with the Strategic Plan presents an opportunity to reflect the organization's demonstrated commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as core to its mandate.

2. This report looks back at the year leading up to these developments, marked by the transition from the Strategic Priority Action Plan for Gender Equality (SPAP 2010-2013) to development of the GAP. Beginning with a final review of progress against key benchmarks of the SPAP the report provides an overview of the GAP development process, programmatic framework, desired results and measures for institutional effectiveness, and concludes with a look at the way forward with respect to finalizing and implementing the GAP.

II. Background

3. The SPAP, originally covering a three-year period (2010-2012), was extended by one year so that the cycle and gender results of the GAP would align with those of the Strategic Plan.

4. UNICEF began the year by undertaking an end-of-cycle review of the main achievements, challenges, gaps and lessons learned under the SPAP. The review covered progress across the eight change areas specified by the SPAP: (a) accountability and strategic framework; (b) capacity and knowledge; (c) leadership, influence and advocacy; (d) programming; (e) 'doing what we advocate'; (f) partnerships; (g) financial resources; and (h) communications. The review findings were reported to the Executive Board at its annual session in 2013.

5. The review conclusions indicated that the SPAP led to important progress in improving institutional systems and processes in support of gender equality, but that a stronger focus was needed on programming and results. UNICEF has made notable progress on leadership commitment, inter-agency partnerships, strengthening of planning and reporting processes, and most of all, ownership by regional and country offices with regard to gender as an institutional priority. However, further improvement is needed in terms of developing a programmatic framework, monitoring and tracking gender-equitable results, developing adequate technical capacity and expertise on gender as well as the necessary allocation of resources.

6. Building on these findings and the foundation of systems and processes established under the SPAP, UNICEF has been developing the GAP with a focus on strengthening programming, results, capacity and resources. To develop a sound and practical plan, UNICEF has undertaken extensive internal and external consultations throughout 2013, including the presentation of a 'zero draft' at the first regular session of the Executive Board in February 2014. The final, costed GAP will be completed by mid-April 2014 and shared at the annual session of the Executive Board in June 2014.

III. Progress under the SPAP 2010-2013

7. While several of the 19 benchmarks of the SPAP could not be tracked effectively and operationalized, four benchmarks have provided useful information for monitoring progress on promotion of gender equality over the 2010-2013 period. These are (a) conduct of gender reviews of country programmes; (b) tracking of expenditures for gender results using the Gender Equality Marker (GEM); (c) adherence of country programme documents to organizational standards for gender mainstreaming; and (d) gender parity in staffing. Additionally, UNICEF has been able to track its leadership and role in inter-agency partnerships through qualitative documentation. This section provides a final report on progress for the 2010-2013 period on the four benchmarks, as well as on inter-agency partnerships and gender mainstreaming in programmes. It notes how the implementation and application of the benchmarks can be further strengthened and made more meaningful in the GAP.

A. Gender reviews

8. An important accomplishment of the SPAP has been establishing an organizational requirement for a gender review of each country programme at least once in a country programme cycle (typically five years). The first year of the SPAP saw a surge of gender reviews — 40 in total — as many countries sought to catch up and fulfil the requirement. Since then, gender reviews of country programmes have continued to be carried out steadily, with 14 reviews in 2011, 21 in 2012 and 15 in 2013. In percentage terms, in 2011, 72 per cent of country programmes had carried out gender reviews within the past five years, while in 2012 this percentage was 76 per cent and in 2013 was 70 per cent. Although there is some variation across years, and the average falls a little below the SPAP target of 75 per cent, the general pattern is encouraging, in that 70 per cent or more of country programmes are reviewed from a gender perspective on a rolling basis.

9. The gender reviews have been supported by a package of guidance and tools that sharpens organizational learning on gender equality during the review process. Follow-up action and quality assurance during the reviews emerged as the main concerns during the end-of-cycle review. So far, where gender programme officers (such as those from headquarters offices) have provided support on using the package, there has been greater compliance and follow-up on action plans resulting from the reviews.

10. A key strategy under the GAP will be to more clearly link the reviews to established country programme processes. In particular, efforts are under way to embed them in midterm reviews and in the development of country programme documents, so that the gender reviews are not conducted or seen as a separate exercise, but rather as an integral part of country programmes. Furthermore, supporting robust and meaningful reviews and integrating findings into country programme planning and implementation will be a key technical assistance role for the regional gender advisers, as proposed under the new GAP. Equally important, the guidance materials developed to implement the programmatic focus as outlined in the GAP will provide practical tools to define more concrete action in terms of programme priorities on gender emerging from the reviews.

B. Gender Equality Marker

11. The GEM tracks the percentage of intermediate results and the programme expenditures expected to contribute to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women. It requires self-assessment against a four-category scale that ranges from zero (not expected to contribute to gender equality in any noticeable way) to three (advancing gender equality is a principal objective of the result). The end-of-cycle review indicated that the GEM has proven to be both an opportunity and a challenge. While it has provided an important opportunity for country offices to discuss how UNICEF contributes to gender equality, it is difficult to set up an objective verification of the GEM ratings. Based on the experience using the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Marker, it is likely that there is inflation in tagging results in the 'principal' category and even more for results tagged in the 'significant' category.

12. Under the GAP, verification and quality assurance regarding the GEM will be a major focus of capacity building for country deputy representatives and planning and monitoring and evaluation officers, who will be further supported by newly established regional gender advisors. Additionally, the regional office and headquarters teams will undertake more periodic and systematic analyses of GEM ratings, progress against them and their alignment with expenditures at the activity level based on strategic intervention codes. These codes have been revised based on the new Strategic Plan and aligned with the gender priorities outlined in the GAP. These analyses will be more systematically shared with country and regional offices so they can make adjustments in a timely fashion.

13. While these limitations must be kept in mind, the overall trend in GEM ratings is positive, especially for this last year of the SPAP. GEM data indicate that expenditures contributing principally or significantly to gender results have risen from 58 per cent in 2011 and 2012 to 62 per cent in 2013. While this percentage is still below the SPAP target of 75 per cent, it is encouraging that the proportion of programme expenditures contributing principally to gender equality has increased steadily, from 11 per cent in 2011 to 13 per cent in 2012 and 16 per cent in 2013. Similarly, during the last year of the SPAP (2013), expenditures contributing principally or significantly to gender equality increased or held steady in most UNICEF regions (figure 1). In most cases, the combined percentage increased by 4-7 percentage points.

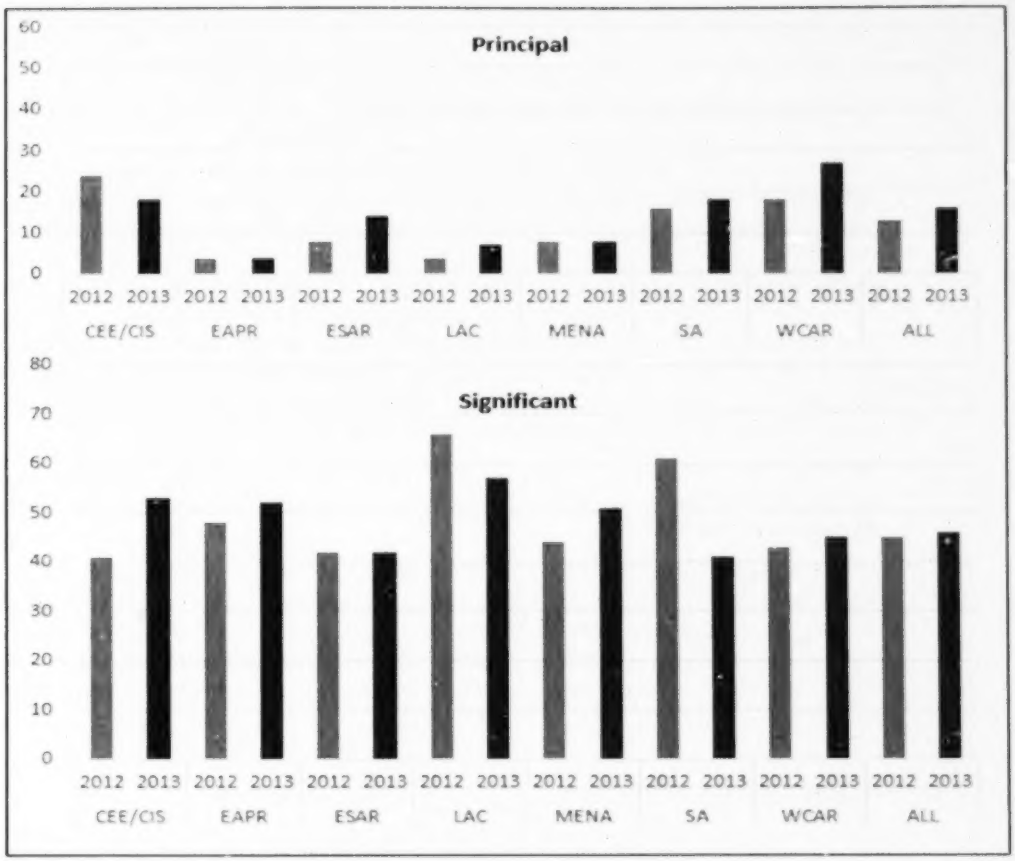

Figure 1

GEM expenditures in 2012 and 2013, principal and significant categories

14. Encouraging and noteworthy is the fact that in 2013, for the first time in the past four years, expenditures contributing principally or significantly to gender equality were above 50 per cent for all key result areas across the five focus areas of the medium-term strategic plan, 2006-2013. Data by key result areas indicate that, as in past years, the highest proportion of expenditures contributing principally or significantly to gender equality results were in education and child protection. However, other areas where gender integration has been less evident in the past showed progress. Two of the key result areas in the young child survival and development focus area showed marked increases in the 'principal' category, with combined programmatic expenditures of over $1 billion. For example, the key result area in support of Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 showed a steady increase in expenditures contributing principally to gender equality, from 10 per cent in 2011 to 11 per cent in 2012 to 19 per cent in 2013. Lifesaving interventions in humanitarian situations, which have become especially important during the past year, showed an even greater increase in expenditures contributing principally to

gender equality, from 3 per cent in 2011 to 7 per cent in 2012 and 16 per cent in 2013.

C. Country programme document reviews

15. The annual qualitative review of country programme documents by an independent evaluator has shown that, after reaching a plateau for the past three years, the percentage of country programme documents approved by the Executive Board that meet established organizational standards for application of gender mainstreaming increased, from 59 per cent in 2012 to 67 per cent in 2013. This marks the first time the proportion has surpassed 60 per cent since the reviews were first conducted. This is a clear sign of progress, even though the percentage is still below the 80 per cent quality threshold and the percentage of country programme documents meeting standards for gender equality continues to be consistently the lowest among all key performance indicators evaluated.

16. The increase over the past year is encouraging and could be linked with increased awareness of the priority and positive impact of integrating gender across all areas of UNICEF work.

17. Under the new GAP, guidance on integrating gender in situation analyses and the development of country programme documents will be a key area to strengthen in order to sustain this momentum. An important step will be providing country offices with guidance during the country programme development process on the criteria used by external reviewers, and the most important steps for meeting those criteria.

D. Gender parity in staffing

18. Striving for gender parity in senior-level posts remains an organizational priority; there is clear evidence of improvement over time. At the end of 2012, 42 per cent of all P5 or higher positions were held by women, and this figure increased to 44 per cent in 2013.

19. UNICEF has put in place concrete policies and measures with the goal of achieving gender parity in senior-level posts within approximately four years, by the end of the GAP term. In a written message to all staff in August 2012, the Executive Director reiterated his commitment to achieving gender parity in senior positions, especially at D1 and D2 levels. The message underscored that gender balance should be one of the key selection criteria for recruitment, and that senior managers are responsible for operationalizing this principle. UNICEF is making sure that selection panels are gender balanced and short lists of candidates include women. Additionally, UNICEF is nurturing female staff from middle level upward for leadership positions and adding qualified females to 'talent groups', as part of efforts to build a ready pool of qualified candidates.

E. Leadership, advocacy and partnerships

20. UNICEF has demonstrated a strong role in leadership, advocacy and partnerships during the SPAP period. Especially in the last two years, UNICEF has

contributed with increased presence, voice and effectiveness in important international forums and partnerships on gender issues. These include A Promise Renewed, the emerging global partnership to end child marriage, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign. UNICEF has a shared role with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) encouraging a focus on inequalities in shaping the post-2015 agenda.

21. UNICEF has strengthened global partnerships to advance girls' education in a number of ways. The organization collaborated with a broad range of partners including Plan International, the Global First Education Initiative, UN-Women, Nike Foundation and the United Nations Foundation to mark the International Day of the Girl Child on 11 October 2013, with the theme of "Innovating for Girls' Education". UNGEI remains a key partnership for UNICEF in advancing girls' education. During the year, UNGEI concentrated on accelerating momentum on girls' education towards the 2015 deadline for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and beyond. The focus was on strategic partnerships, including with the Global Partnership for Education, with which UNGEI signed an agreement to support girls' completion of primary education and transition to secondary education.

22. The Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change, co-sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF, concluded its first phase with a joint evaluation. It found that the joint programme has accelerated the abandonment of FGM/C in 15 programme countries and helped to strengthen the momentum for change at the global level. Some 30 governments, of which 18 represented UNICEF programme countries, gathered in Rome to review progress and plan the second phase of the programme, covering 2014-2017, as called for in United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/148 (2012).

23. UNICEF continues to be active in inter-agency processes and initiatives to promote gender equality as a member of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. The organization has worked closely with UN-Women in support of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan, in particular in sharing knowledge and experience with other agencies concerning the performance standard on tracking resources and developing gender markers. UNICEF also collaborated with UN-Women on advocating for a stand-alone goal on gender equality in the post-2015 development framework and on specific indicators and targets.

24. UNICEF facilitates reporting by United Nations country teams to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women during its pre-sessional working group meetings. In addition, UNICEF co-chairs, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the sub-group on accounting for resources for gender equality of the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality. UNICEF supported the task team in seeking the endorsement of the High-Level Committee on Programmes, High-Level Committee on Management and Chief Executives Board on common principles and standards for gender equality markers for the United Nations system.

F. Gender mainstreaming in programmes

25. Gender mainstreaming improved programme results in 2013, often benefiting the most disadvantaged females, such as indigenous women and girls, girls living in rural settings, girls most acutely affected by poverty and marginalized adolescent girls.

26. A few examples stand out concerning young child survival and development. In Zimbabwe, a gender analysis of nutrition programmes conducted with the relevant ministry resulted in actions to address programming bottlenecks, such as lack of decision-making power by women, access to and control of resources, and nutrition awareness. In Chile, UNICEF promoted the involvement of both parents in parenting and participation by boys and men in family care through activities such as training sessions for health care providers. In the Dominican Republic, UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Labour in creating criteria and guidelines to set up breastfeeding rooms in workplaces. Through advocacy and technical support, UNICEF Honduras worked to ensure that the National Congress passed the Law on Promotion and Protection of Breastfeeding. The law constitutes an important step in guaranteeing working mothers the right to breastfeed their babies and providing follow-up support through child care centres.

27. In Gabon and Lesotho, country offices are working to strengthen AIDS planning and responding to girls' needs as part of addressing the stark gender disparity in the HIV prevalence rate among adolescents aged 15 to 24.

28. In child protection, UNICEF offices in Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia supported initiatives to strengthen gender-sensitive services for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) through the establishment of one-stop service centres. Many UNICEF education programmes benefited from applying a gender mainstreaming approach. In Iraq, for example, UNICEF and UN-Women conducted a gender audit of curriculum and textbooks. In Somalia, UNICEF supported the Go to School programme, which employed community-level social mobilization mechanisms and female role models to increase girls' enrolment.

IV. Developing and implementing the Gender Action Plan

29. These examples of good programming and the encouraging signs of results from systems strengthening provide a strong foundation for advances during the next four years. In 2013, UNICEF was simultaneously developing the new GAP while concluding the priority activities of the SPAP. Development of the GAP has involved four main processes: (a) extensive internal and external consultations; (b) mapping of priorities and specification of a programmatic framework; (c) engagement with the Strategic Plan development process and specification of indicators; and (d) assessment of the institutional capacity, systems and resources necessary to successfully implement the GAP. Initial steps for implementing the key features of the new GAP — establishing its programmatic focus, specifying results, building capacity and increasing resources — were embedded in all four processes.

A. Consultative process

30. Allowing all stakeholders to share ownership of the GAP is essential to its success, so consultations within UNICEF and with external partners were important activities in 2013. The consultative process was useful for learning from past experiences and challenges faced not only by UNICEF but by most organizations in mainstreaming gender, and for forging viable solutions. Thus, UNICEF reached out to its field offices, sister United Nations agencies and Members of the Executive Board, as well as research and civil society organizations. The consultations helped UNICEF to position its priorities, with the objective of advancing local and global agendas on gender issues and mainstreaming as reflected in the Millennium Development Goals, and to participate in shaping the post-2015 development framework.

31. Priority was placed on ensuring that the field perspective informed the GAP so that it would be a practical tool in terms of programmatic relevance, organizational systems and ownership by UNICEF country and regional offices. All seven regions and most headquarters divisions participated in the end-of-cycle review of the SPAP. A reference group consisting of members of the Gender Equality Task Force (representing the seven regions) and representatives of headquarters divisions has served as the main consultative body during the GAP development process. A global technical consultation was organized in Bangkok in November. Attended by the Deputy Executive Director for programmes, it brought together over 50 staff members from all regions and different parts of the organization.

32. The consultation led to identification of priority issue areas for the organization's programmatic focus on gender equality, related bottlenecks and barriers, and options for building capacity that could be incorporated into the new plan. It energized the participants to contribute their experience and expertise while and also taking back shared learning for further reflection in offices across UNICEF. An intranet site was established to facilitate further communication among the reference group, consultation participants and UNICEF staff in general in developing and finalizing the GAP.

33. From the start of the GAP development process, sister United Nations agencies were consulted to ensure better coordination and complementarity in organizational plans and strategies. Consultations took place through a number of meetings with UN-Women, UNFPA and UNDP between June and December 2013. These meetings focused on (a) addressing overlaps and ensuring complementarity of gender focus in all entities' strategic plans; (b) collaborating to operationalize the United Nations' gender mandate in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and Delivering as One and aligning with the United Nations System-wide Action Plan; and (c) jointly mobilizing around shared, measurable goals and indicators in the post-2015 development agenda. A major emerging focus of shared efforts was the rights and empowerment of adolescent girls and initiatives to address GBV. It was agreed that each agency brings both a clear mandate and its own unique added value in moving the shared agenda forward.

34. The meetings with Executive Board members, both bilaterally and in small groups, focused on the overlap in programme priorities between UNICEF and Member States. They addressed concrete ways to achieve results and increase resources for gender work within the framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan.

Discussions with programme and donor countries addressed the overlap in their gender policies and frameworks with the evolving priorities in the GAP. Shared commitments were evident on issues such as child marriage, girls' education, adolescent health and violence against women and girls. Member States emphasized the importance of costing the GAP and obtaining sufficient resources for its implementation, along with putting in place a meaningful process for tracking implementation progress.

B. Specification of programmatic framework

35. First and foremost, these consultations have helped to shape the programmatic framework for the new GAP. It was decided during the year that it must be grounded in the overarching UNICEF refocus on equity. A focus on gender equality is necessary not only for achieving equitable results (given gender disparity in child outcomes), but also because gender discrimination causes bottlenecks and barriers to ensuring realization of the rights of all children. Furthermore, based on the most recent evidence summarizing the historical challenges with gender mainstreaming approaches, it is clear that integrating gender into organizational operations requires both targeted efforts and gender mainstreaming. It was, therefore, determined that UNICEF will employ both over the next four years as it works to achieve gender-equitable results and overcome bottlenecks and barriers.

36. In specifying the targeted initiatives, considerable effort was spent in mapping ongoing UNICEF work to assess the issues that present the best options for acceleration based on various strategic considerations. Primary consideration was given to the relevance of an issue to the lives and rights of large numbers of children, followed by its relevance across the range of UNICEF-supported countries and regions. Another important consideration was the extent to which the evidence base and established measures could support mobilizing action at scale and specifying measurable results. A final consideration was the potential for more efficient and viable solutions across sectors for addressing gender-related issues.

37. The mapping led to the conclusion that UNICEF was well-positioned to make a transformative contribution on four cross-sectoral gender issues by consolidating action across all seven result areas in the Strategic Plan and prioritizing them in the GAP. The four issues are (a) girls' secondary education; (b) child marriage; (c) gender and adolescent health; and (d) GBV in emergencies. As a foundation for accelerating progress in 2014-2017, the process of assessment during 2013 led to further sharpening of the gender focus in these four areas of UNICEF work.

Girls' secondary education

38. Girls' secondary education has been prioritized as an initiative under the GAP because of the overwhelming evidence that educating girls, particularly to secondary level, can be profoundly transformative, not only for girls, but also for their families, communities and societies. Despite this fact and the progress made in increasing enrolment at primary level, the potential of girls' education has not been realized in many parts of the world. In too many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, gender gaps for girls widen at secondary level. This is especially the case among girls belonging to marginalized groups — for example, girls who are poor, live in rural areas or come from ethnic minority groups. In other

regions, despite higher rates of secondary school completion, the quality of learning and the skills girls acquire are not adequate for their success in the personal, social, political or economic spheres.

39. UNICEF has a long history of supporting girls' education, and is already investing significant resources to improve enrolment, retention and learning outcomes. Demand-side interventions include stipends, scholarships and cash transfers to improve access for the most disadvantaged girls and support to community-based initiatives aimed at changing social norms that prevent girls from meaningfully participating and succeeding in school. UNICEF supports creation of spaces for girls' empowerment by strengthening their social and peer networks and increasing access to mentors and economic opportunities. Supply-side interventions have focused on adequate provision of quality education services; improved water and sanitation facilities in school, including provision for menstrual hygiene for adolescent girls; integration of gender-responsive pedagogy as part of the child-friendly school approach; teacher training and capacity development; and addressing GBV in schools.

40. For example, in Nigeria UNICEF supports the Girls' Education Project through conditional cash transfers and female teacher trainee scholarships, aiming to boost girls' enrolment and retention. Data have demonstrated the impact of these efforts, with the net attendance ratio for girls at the junior secondary level increasing from 49 per cent in 2007 to 71 per cent in 2013. In Ethiopia, UNICEF is piloting an initiative promoting income-generating activities through a revolving fund to promote girls' education in the Gambella region. In Nepal, UNICEF supports the Girls' Access to Education programme, which provides non-formal education to out-of-school girls, mostly from marginalized communities.

41. As part of articulating a vision, strategy and theory of change that advance the focus on equity and learning in the Strategic Plan, UNICEF is building on its earlier success in school readiness and expanding access to primary and lower secondary education. It is concentrating on improving learning outcomes for girls in countries where they are excluded from education in significant numbers. In conjunction with the International Day of the Girl Child 2013, a review and mapping was undertaken of innovations that support girls' transitions and retention in school and improve their skills, prospects and self-confidence. In partnership with UNGEI and gender and education experts, UNICEF has been reviewing the availability of quality data and improved metrics to monitor gender equality in education. Equally, through its strategic role in the Global Partnership for Education, support to the Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative and as the lead agency for UNGEI, UNICEF is encouraging governments, donors and development partners to give priority to advancing girls' education and the related equity and learning agenda as part of the post-2015 development agenda.

Child marriage

42. Child marriage is prioritized because it represents one of the most widespread structural and normative barriers a girl faces in many regions of the world. It robs a girl of her childhood, ends her education, exposes her to violence, disease and early childbearing; and puts her in a subordinate position for life. Girls who marry are likely to remain in poverty, as are their children. And the numbers are large:

70 million women aged 20-24 — one woman in three — were married as children. Over the last three decades, 400 million women were married as children.

43. Over 40 UNICEF country offices are already engaged in addressing child marriage through advocacy, capacity-building, partnerships and communication for development activities. For example, in Burkina Faso, UNICEF is carrying out social mobilization campaigns through local media and community leaders to gain the commitment of prominent traditional leaders to end child marriage and raise awareness of its harmful consequences. The Ethiopia and India country offices have been working closely with governmental and other partners in developing national plans of action to end child marriage. The India country office is supporting the roll-out of a media campaign on ending child marriage. In most countries active on this issue, there is recognition that promoting girls' education is the single best preventive to child marriage. As a result, countries such as Bangladesh and Ethiopia are piloting cash transfers to support girls to stay in school. Initiatives to empower adolescents to be change agents against child marriage are under way in a number of countries, including Bangladesh and Nepal.

44. In the last year, UNICEF has further advanced its leadership role in identifying solutions to child marriage both in collaboration with donor and programme countries and within key global partnerships. Building on the momentum generated by the International Day of the Girl Child 2012, which focused on ending child marriage, UNICEF has provided strategic and technical support to bilateral and multilateral efforts to articulate policy and resource commitments to ending child marriage. This has included close collaboration with the governments of Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as with the European Commission. In addition to programming resources already deployed at country level, UNICEF has committed $2 million in core resources over one year (2014) to support development of strategies and capacity to end child marriage in eight countries: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, India, Nepal, Niger, Uganda and Sierra Leone.

Gender and adolescent health

45. Gender disparities in health status and outcomes become more pronounced as girls and boys reach adolescence, with the onset of puberty and differing experiences of life transitions. For example, boys become more vulnerable to road traffic injuries and violence, while for girls the leading cause of death is complications related to pregnancy and childbirth. Data from 21 developing countries show that more than one third of all girls aged 15 to 19 suffer from anaemia. In addition, 60 per cent of the almost 2.2 million adolescents living with HIV are girls. The initiative targeting gender and adolescent health in the GAP provides an overarching framework for addressing interconnected adolescent health issues with a clear focus on gender disparities.

46. Adolescent pregnancy and care are important priorities in UNICEF work in health. Moreover, adolescent mothers have 50 per cent more stillbirths and newborn deaths than do mothers aged 20-29 years. Preventing teenage pregnancies and providing adequate prenatal and postnatal care are therefore important elements of A Promise Renewed. Commitments to it have been made by 176 governments, and supportive action has accelerated across the globe in the last year.

47. Similarly, the gendered nature of HIV and AIDS is a key concern for UNICEF. The new Strategic Plan has a strong focus on addressing the gender-related barriers to prevention and care in the second decade of life, so that boys and girls have full access to the information, support and treatment they need.

48. UNICEF is leading the integration of menstrual hygiene management into its water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programming in schools. In the past year, the emphasis on documenting practices and barriers girls experience in various contexts has increased, along with efforts to develop viable solutions based on stronger evidence. UNICEF is developing guidelines for incorporating a menstrual hygiene management package into WASH in Schools programmes, and is taking on a more visible advocacy role with global partners and national governments.

49. UNICEF has a strong history of addressing FGM/C, working with UNFPA, and action in this area has accelerated in 2013. The two agencies concluded the first phase of the Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, which covered 15 African countries between 2008 and 2013. Both contributed to the evaluation of the programme. In July 2013, UNICEF published a data-driven report, "Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A statistical overview and exploration of the dynamics of change". The report provides the most comprehensive analysis of FGM/C to date and explores the data from a social norms perspective. It provides insights to support programmes and policies working to eliminate the practice. A second phase of the programme (2014-2017) is now under way, covering 16 African countries and Yemen.

50. Another area that saw a growing role for UNICEF during 2013 was the integration of broader health services in the delivery of the HPV vaccine to girls aged 9 to 13. In collaboration with a consortium of GAVI Alliance partners (World Health Organization, PATH and UNFPA), UNICEF participated in the HPV vaccine demonstration project and is supporting concurrent assessments on adolescent health interventions. Using a toolkit developed by UNICEF in collaboration with the World Health Organization and UNFPA, these assessments are currently under way in four countries (Ghana, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe), with technical assistance from UNICEF.

Gender-based violence in emergencies

51. GBV is one of the most pervasive yet least recognized violations of human rights in the world. The vulnerability of women and girls to GBV is particularly acute during disasters and conflicts, which exacerbate it. In such contexts the risks of violence are compounded by armed conflict, displacement and the breakdown of traditional protection mechanisms. Women and girls faced heightened risk of multiple forms of GBV where emergencies reduce access to services and formal systems of protection and justice, cause displacement and separate families and communities. Another key challenge is the lack of reliable data on GBV, in both humanitarian and non-emergency situations.

52. With UNFPA, UNICEF co-leads the GBV area of responsibility in the protection cluster of United Nations humanitarian action. As such, it supports the development of global guidance, standards and tools on consistent and effective GBV programming in emergencies. In recent years, UNICEF has expanded its GBV programming to better serve affected children and women in several emergency and post-emergency contexts, including Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jordan,

Lebanon, Somalia and South Sudan. The largest UNICEF programme to address conflict-related GBV is being implemented in Democratic Republic of the Congo. It reaches over 600,000 people a year with information on preventing sexual violence and how and where to access services.

53. UNICEF has been working to support and empower adolescent girls in emergency contexts. For example, in Democratic Republic of Congo UNICEF is working with local partners to establish adolescent discussion groups (separate groups for girls and boys) to build life skills and challenge tolerance of sexual violence. In Nepal, as part of efforts to reintegrate girls and boys associated with armed forces and armed groups, UNICEF is providing reintegration support. This includes life skills education for young mothers to help them to attend school while supporting their children.

54. UNICEF is articulating priorities to better respond to children and women in emergencies as part of the global initiative Call to Action to End Violence against Women and Girls in Emergencies. It incorporates the Keep Her Safe initiative of the United Kingdom government and the Safe from the Start initiative of the United States government. UNICEF launched its End Violence against Children campaign, a multi-year global initiative to build awareness and generate momentum to prevent and respond to violence against children, including in the context of emergencies. In addition, the organization has been collaborating with UNFPA, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Rescue Committee to roll out the gender-based violence information management system, which is used in 18 countries.

C. Strategic planning process and specification of indicators

55. As this summary has shown, UNICEF is already accelerating its work on the four targeted gender priorities and is well positioned to both deepen and expand current programming. With this level of action and investment, it is critical to measure results. The SPAP end-of-cycle review revealed that the lack of an overarching results framework on gender made it impossible to determine the cumulative impact of the efforts undertaken under the previous plan. Learning from this past omission, UNICEF has made every effort to integrate gender indicators into the results framework of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and to align them with the GAP programmatic framework. The integration process began in 2012 and continued through 2013. Consultations between the gender team, sectoral colleagues and the Division of Policy and Strategy have led to the development of measurable outcome- and output-level gender indicators in each of the outcome areas.

56. This close collaboration has encouraged a focus on quality in specifying gender indicators that reflect the cumulative effort across the organization. Rather than focusing on quantity and pressing for all indicators to have a gender focus, the teams have worked together to specify gender indicators in each outcome area that are feasible and measurable across the range of countries where they would be practically applicable. As such, the results framework for the Strategic Plan includes 42 gender indicators, covering impact-, outcome- and output-level results across the seven outcomes. These indicators have relevance to both gender mainstreaming and the targeted gender initiatives.

57. This close collaboration means that the programmatic framework for the GAP is reflected in the theories of change developed for the seven outcomes. Equally important, the gender team is working with the lead teams of all the outcome areas to integrate GAP programming priorities into the sectoral strategies and guidance materials developed to support implementation of the Strategic Plan. As more detailed guidance on the GAP priorities is developed, it will be systematically linked to the relevant sectoral guidance materials. This will make it an integral element of the organization's programmatic work rather than a separate stream or an afterthought.

D. Institutional capacity and resources

58. UNICEF senior management has taken an active role in assessing the capacity, systems and resources required to implement the new GAP. In addition to championing the integration of GAP priorities into the Strategic Plan and related tracking and monitoring processes, it has deliberated on how to best ensure accountability for GAP results, how to put in place the core capacity and expertise required to implement the plan, and how to mobilize both core and other resources to support the specified programme priorities and results.

59. There is agreement that accountability for performance on GAP implementation and results lies fundamentally with management, including regional and division directors as well as country representatives and section chiefs. Efforts are underway to determine the best process for putting this accountability into action — such as through job definitions, performance evaluations and other means. A steering committee led by the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, will ensure organization-wide accountability on implementation of the GAP.

60. A decision has been made to support GAP implementation with an additional $12 million in regular resources during the 2014-2017 budget cycle. Additionally, a thematic fund on gender has been established to mobilize resources on the cross-sectoral aspects of the GAP, particularly the targeted gender initiatives and the bottlenecks and barriers that are common across sectors. The fund will especially support innovation and evidence-building on these cross-sectoral gender priorities. It is expected that gender mainstreaming activities will be supported by a combination of core, sectoral thematic and other funds. The delineation of a programmatic focus in the GAP is already providing the impetus for accelerated fundraising and programming on the targeted initiatives, with a clearer articulation of gender results and budget lines in proposals. Henceforth, this articulation will be required for all proposals that include a significant gender component in the proposed scope of work.

61. UNICEF has reviewed existing capacity and the need for gender expertise, both across sectors and within sectors, to carry out the programming priorities articulated in the GAP. A multi-pronged approach to strengthening UNICEF capacity on gender has been developed, beginning with the enhancement of core capacity by adding gender advisors in each regional office and strengthening gender capacity at headquarters. Over the next two years, country offices will be using their programme planning and review cycles to increase both dedicated gender expertise and capacity in line with their programmatic focus on gender and the size of their budgets. Plans are underway to better tap into existing gender capacity within

sectors and strengthen it further, by creating a new job category of sectoral gender specialists, thus making gender mainstreaming more sustainable.

62. UNICEF is defining other modalities for defining skills and strengthening capacity on gender, especially for gender focal points in smaller offices, and for key posts in country offices such as deputy representatives and planning and monitoring officers. Given their central role in country programmes, staff in these positions will receive more targeted training on gender. Gender training will be further strengthened for all staff through the Programme Procedures and Policy manual. Cross-sectoral task forces and working groups organized around specific programmatic activities and results are proving to be another effective means for building strategic and technical capacity on gender. Their role will be strengthened, especially in the work on targeted gender initiatives.

V. The way forward

63. The trend with respect to gender equality at UNICEF is encouraging. While the end-of-cycle review pointed to some clear gaps following implementation of the SPAP, development of the GAP has responded systematically to these findings so UNICEF can build on existing strengths and achievements while avoiding past mistakes. The SPAP performance review indicates that several key performance benchmarks are now trending positive, especially over the past year. Priority is being placed on gender issues across all areas of work, as reflected in increasing expenditures on results contributing principally or significantly to gender equality. Country programmes are improving in their integration of gender, and they are more regularly being reviewed from a gender perspective. Strong partnerships have been forged in support of gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women, and there is progress in closing the UNICEF gender gap in senior level posts.

64. This positive momentum has been reinforced by the GAP development process, which has engaged senior management and all parts of the organization, including country and regional offices and headquarters. The engagement has led to the further strengthening and expression of commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women among staff and the clear articulation of gender results and indicators in the new Strategic Plan.

65. Organizational dedication to gender equality is evident in the commitment of resources and the development of capacity in this area. Ongoing programmatic work on gender issues critical to the UNICEF mandate represents a promising launching point towards achieving the gender results set out in the GAP.

66. The GAP lays out an ambitious agenda, and much remains to be done. At the same time, the momentum and the organization's strong commitment hold promise for achieving its goals.